



BLUE AND GOLD

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

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Giving Back in a Time of Need

ELLA HOLLENBACH
Columbia-Montour AVTS FFA Chapter

The Columbia Montour AVTS is located in Bloomsburg, Pa., which was flooded in September. Many people were left without homes — and others without food. Those lucky enough to have a house to go back to still had the price of home repairs. Seeing many people affected and wanting to come to their aid, the Columbia Montour AVTS FFA Chapter found a way to help.

Each year, members from surrounding FFA chapters and 4-H clubs meet at the Bloomsburg Fair to auction off project market animals. This year, however, the fair was cancelled. After the fairgrounds were cleaned up, the fair board decided to allow those members to show and sell their market animals. Seeing this event, the FFA chapter took the opportunity to help the hurting community. They used chapter funds and purchased a 210-pound pig.

The FFA has located a local butcher that offered to butcher the pig for free. The meat will be given to the Ronald McDonald House; AGAPE, a local non-profit disaster relief organization; and needy families within the school.

The Columbia Montour FFA Chapter prepares a Ronald McDonald House dinner for both Thanksgiving/Christmas and the Easter season. Two hams from the purchased pig will be used at the Ronald McDonald House dinners. The Ronald McDonald House helps families whose loved ones are in the hospital for extended periods of time.

Another portion of the pork has been offered to students who have been adversely impacted due to the flooding. What is left will be given to the AGAPE foundation. This is a local organization that helps the local flood victims. The leftovers include; bacon, pork chops, and hot dogs.



AP Photo/Bloomsburg Press Enterprise, Jimmy May
Livestock barns on the Bloomsburg Fairgrounds, Bloomsburg, Pa., are covered with flood water from the Susquehanna River to their roof line in September. At the rescheduled livestock sale, the Columbia-Montour AVTS FFA Chapter purchased a market hog and donated the pork to several local causes..

Good-bye Fall, Hello Midwinter Convention

FROM THE OFFICERS STATION

This year has been record setting for Pennsylvania from things like earthquakes and floods to tornadoes and eight inches of snow in October. While all of these events have been happening, the team and I have been running from one end of the state to another doing chapter visits. I can easily speak for my teammates when I say, “We are so happy to spend each day with FFA members.”

January is coming up fast and that means the Midwinter Convention is just around the corner. We are pumped to hand out Keystone degrees and see the new members put on their first jacket. Writing this article takes me back to the first time I put my jacket on in the Equine Arena with the



SARAH KESSLER

other freshman and sophomores from all across Pennsylvania.

While we are looking forward to Midwinter Convention, don’t forget about our annual ACES (Agricultural Cooperation Establishes Success) conference coming up on the second and third weekend of February! This year the theme for the conference is “NASA (Noticing Agricultural Students Achievements): It’s Out of This World.” It is sure to be an awesome time.

My teammates and I are excited to continue our statewide tour visiting the FFA chapters. Happy Holidays and safe hunting.

Editor’s Note: Sarah Kessler is the Pa. State FFA Treasurer.

FFA Members Run With No Limits

MARCUS BONAPARTE
Philadelphia FFA Chapter

On Nov. 20, nine Philadelphia FFA members completed the full Philadelphia Marathon (26.2 miles) while two Philadelphia FFA members completed the half marathon (13.1 miles) with the marathon training program Students Run Philly Style.

I was once asked about what I thought of the Philadelphia Marathon and my response was, “the Marathon is something that I do to challenge myself and exceed my limits. It is important for me to go over my limits because if I don’t, then I will never be able to reach my full potential.” I also acknowledged that being the captain and having completed the marathon last year, I needed

to keep my head clear. When I took one step over the start line, all of the thousands of people vanished and the only people in the race were me, myself, and I. I am extremely proud of my team, which is trained by five FFA advisers, a former Philadelphia FFA member and a former 4-H member. I know that finishing a marathon is one of those feats that less than 1 percent of the population has accomplished, and to be a part of that 1 percent feels pretty good.

More than 23 Philadelphia FFA members have completed the full Philadelphia marathon. Great thanks goes to Nathan Moser, Kristy Myers, Garth Schuler, Tiffany Turrentine, Guy Amoroso, Jesse Hallowell and Jess McAtamney for mentoring and running alongside of our FFA kids.

Somerset County had a ‘Ball’ of a Time

BRITTANY OVERDORFF
Somerset Area Chapter Treasurer

Somerset County recently held a volleyball tournament at Meyersdale High School which included four county FFA chapters: Berlin, Meyersdale, Somerset Career and Technology Center and Somerset Area. In addition to the four chapters in attendance two state FFA officers —Tyler Claypool and Jenna Moser — joined in on the fun. The sporting events are always something the students look forward to. Generally there are about 50 FFA members participating from the county along with parents and friends. The Somerset County Volleyball winner was Somerset Area School District.

Holding different sporting events at a county level is an awesome way to get students to participate and become excited about the FFA. It also brings local chapters together for a fun filled night. Events usually take at least an hour to plan and the end result is well worth the time and effort.



Northern Lebanon FFA Food Drive Benefits Food Pantry



Photo submitted by Northern Lebanon FFA
The FFA students of Northern Lebanon High School hosted a Thanksgiving food drive that benefits residents in the school district and surrounding areas. The students collected food for a week before the holiday. From those home-room collections, the chapter raised \$458.78 and 620 items of food for the Jonestown Food Pantry.